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C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 5557

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

REF: A) SAIGON 5451
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SUBJECT: ELECTION OUTCOME IN BINH DINH PROVINCE

1. THIS IS THE FIRST OF A SERIES OF ELECTION ANALYSES ON CERTAIN SELECTED PROVINCES IN EACH CORPS AREA. THE EMBASSY PLANS A MORE COMPREHENSIVE ANALYSIS OF THE VOTING IN THE NATION AS A WHOLE AS SOON AS SUFFICIENT DETAILED INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE.

(1)

2. GENERAL THIEU EMERGED WITH SOLID VICTORY IN BINH DINH,

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RUNNING BEST IN PROVINCE CAPITAL AND LEAST SECURE NORTHERN DISTRICTS TO AMASS 11,529 OF 270,790 VALID BALLOTS, OR

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43 PERCENT. TRUONG DINH DZU, BORN IN BINH DINH, DREW 46,0J6 VOTES (17 PERCENT), MOST OF THEM IN THREE SOUTHERN DISTRICTS OF PROVINCE WHERE SECURITY IS BEST OUTSIDE OF PROVINCE CAPITAL OF QUI NHON (THIEU RESTED DZU BY BETTER THAN THREE TO ONE IN PROVINCE CAPITAL). THIEU GOT CATHOLIC VOTE IN QUI NHON CITY AND MANY VOTES FROM RURAL AREAS WHERE THIEU AND KY ARE WELL KNOWN, SECURITY IS IMPORTANT FACTOR; AND VILLAGERS PROBABLY MORE AMENABLE TO SUBTLE PRESSURE FROM LOCAL OFFICIALS. PHAN KHAC SUU, WHO BENEFITED FROM SUPPORT F
OM SUBSTANTIAL AN QUANG BUDDHIST VOTE, RAN STRONG SECOND TO THIEU IN QUI NHON (THIEU TOPPED SUU THERE BY THREE TO TWO) BUT POOR SHOWING IN COUNTRYSIDE REDUCED SUU'S VOTE TOTAL IN PROVINCE AS WHOLE TO MERE 27,151 OR 10 PERCENT. FOURTH FINISHER WAS REVOLUTIONARY DAI VIET HA THUC KY (17,6#1 VOTES, 6 PERCENT) WHOSE SUPPORT AS EXPECTED CAME FROM QUI NHON TOWN AND THE TWO DISTRICTS OF TUY PHUOC AND HOAI NHON WHERE HE HAD ACTIVE AND EFFECTIVE ORGAN ZATION (DISTRICT CHIEF OF TUY PHUOC IS RDV PARTY MEMBER AS IS COMMANDER OF 51ST A
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REOIMENT, LOCATED IN HOAI NHON).

3. IN GENERAL BINH DINH ELECTION APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN HONESTLY CONDUCTED ALTHOUGH SEVERAL REPRESENTATIVES OF CIVILIAN CANDIDATES ASSERT THERE WAS UNFAIR PRESSURE EXERTED FOR THIEU BY LOCAL OFFICIALSBN ESPECIALLY IN LESS SECURE NORTHERN DISTRICTS. NOT MANY POLL WATCHERS FOR C VILIAN CANDIDATES WERE IN EVIDENCE BUT WITH EXCEPTION OF ONE POLLING PLACE WHERE ARVN TROOPS MADE SHAMBLES OF ORDERLY POLLING PROCESS IN HURRY TO GET BORING TASK ACCOMPLISHED. VOTING PROCESS ZAS WELL ORGANIZED, BALLOTS WERE HANDED OUT IN SPECIFIED RANDOM ORDER, AND VOTERS APPEARED IN FESTIVE AND RELAXED MOOD. VC ACTIV TY WHICH HAD BEEN INTENSE IN WEEK PRECEDING ELECTION FELL OFF ON ELECTION DAY AND HAD NO ADVERSE

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EFFECT ON VOTER TSRNOST.

4. ASSEYPMENT OF REASONS FOR OUTCOME MUST T
CE INTO
ACCOUNT VARIED FACTORS. THIEU WON BECAUSE HE GOT VOTES
OF SUBSTANTIAL NUMBER OF CATHOLICS (ALMOST ALT OF WHOM
ARE LOCAL CENTRAL V ETNAMESE), BECAUSE THIEU AND KY ARE WELL
KNOWN AND THEIR NAMES ESSOCIATED WITH IMPROVED
SECURITY, PLUS FACT HIS SUPPORTERS USED INCUMBENT'S
ADVANTAGE TO FULL EFFECT. FACT THIEU DID BETTER IN

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NORTHERN DISTRICTS OF BINH DINH THAN HE DID IN MORE
SECURE SOSTH PERHAPS ATTRIBUTABLE TO FACT THAT DZU
PARTISANS, WHO APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN "OUTSIDERS" BUT
WHO WERE VERY ACT IN LAST TEN DAYS BEFORE ELECTION,
PROBABLY COULD TRAVEL MORE WIDELY IN MORE SECURE SOUTHERN
AREES. ATSO RECEPTIVITY TO MORE OR LESS SUBTLE
HRESSURE BY LOCAL OFFICIALS POSSIBLY CONTRIBUTED TO
THIEU VICTORY IN LESS SECURE AREAS. IN NORTHERN
DISTRICTS MANY PEOPLE WERE PARTICIPATING FOR FIRST
TIME IN A VIETNAMESE ELECTION, THESE AREAS HAVING RETURNED TO
GVN CONTROL SINCE SEPTEMBER 1966. THESE PEOPLE HAVE
NEVER HAD THE HEALTHY EXPERIENCE OF AN ELECTION
WHICH WAS GENUINELY FREE AND AFTER WHICH NO ONE
SUFFERED FROM HAVING VOTED THIXS WAY OR THAT; THEY MAY
THEREFORE HAVE PROVED MORE AMENABLE TO SUGGESTION
FROM LOCAL OFFICIALS THAT THIEU VOTE WAS GOOD VOTE
FOR THEM TO CAST.

5. DZS DID AS WELL AS HE DID PROBABLY BECAUSE OF
SIMPLISTIC PEACE APPEAL WHICH COUPLED WITH MOST
VOCAL ANTI-GVN CAMPAIGN PITCH IDENTIFIED HIM AS
SOMETHING UNIQUE AMONG CIVILIAN CONTENDERS. FACT
DZU BORN IN BINH DINH HELPED AS WELL, AS DID
CAMPAIGN APPEARANCE IN QUI NHON WHICH HE DOMINATED

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WITH EFFECTIVE AND SLASHING ATTACK ON GVN. THERE IS NO EVIDENCE YET AVAILABLE WHICH SUGGESTS THAT IN BINH DINH VC ISSUED ORDERS TO THOSE SUSCEPTIBLE TO THEIR INFLUENCE TO VOTE FOR DZU.

6. SUU DID WELL IN QU NHON CITY BUT VERY POORTY ELSEWHERE. HE PROBABLY LOST SOME VOTES TO QUAT WHOSE SYMBOT WAS EASILY CONFUSED WITH SUU'S. FACT SUU SUPPORT ALMOST ENTIRELY CONFINED TO CITY DEMONSTRATES LIMITATION OF BINH DINH BUDDHIST ORGANIZATION (MUCH OF WHICH LEANS TO TRI QUANG) WHICH APPARENTLY HAS LITTLE STRENGTH OUTSIDE THE PROVINCE CAPITAL.

7. THERE WERE FEW SURPRISES IN UPPER HOUSE RACE, WHERE BIG WINNERS WERE LIST 13, TRAN VAN DON (50,930); LIST 8, CATHOLIC SLATE OF NGUYEN GIA HIEN (40,657); LIST 1; OF THAI QUANG HOANG (35,597); LIST 46, BUDDHIST TICKET OF LE VAHXNGHIEM (34,486); AND RDV ATES OF NGUYEN NGOC KY (LIST 21; 33,942) AND TRUONG CONG CUU (LIST 25; 34,077). CATHOLICS ALMOST PUT ACROSS TWO MORE STATES, NGUYEN VAN HUYEN (LIST 40; 33,790, IN SEVENTH PLACE) AND HUYNH VAN CAO (LIST 31; 33,725, EIGHTH PLACE). BINH DINH'S VOTE CONTRIBUTED MATERIALLY TO THE NATIONWIDE VICTORY OF SLATES 8, 31, 40 AND 21. STRONG

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SHOWING OF LIST 1!, A SLATE WITH CONSIDERABLE DIEMIST FLAVOR WHICH FINISHED 15TH NATIONALLY, IS DIFFICULT TO EXPLAIN; IT DOES HAVE HIGH PROPORTION OF CENTRAL VIETNAMESE, HOWEVER, AND ONE OR MORE OF ITS MEMBERS MAY HAVE GOOD CONNECTIONS IN BINH DINH OF WHICH WE ARE AS YET UNAWARE.

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